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It's just happened ...

Energy efficiency and energy saving key challenges for sustainable development

Second UNECE Regional Implementation Forum for Sustainable Development, 15-16 December

The Forum, chaired by Mr. Elliot Morley, State Minister for Environment and Climate Change of the United Kingdom, identified energy efficiency and energy savings as a key priority contributing to sustainable energy and an area where

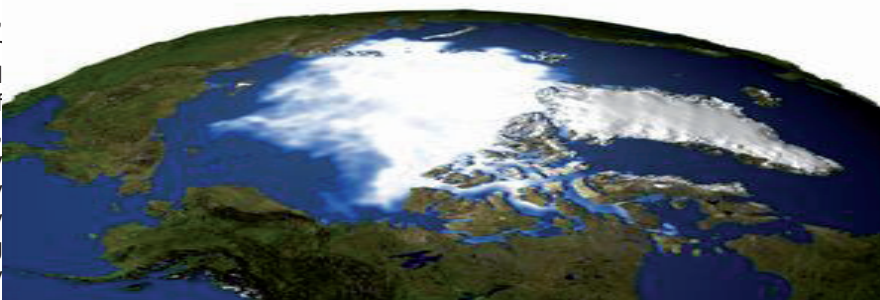
the UNECE region can make particular progress. However, barriers need to be overcome for energy efficient measures to deliver their full potential; this requires education and awareness raising, sometimes fostering behavioural change, regulatory and energy pricing reforms, emissions trading, and particularly the establishment of adequate financing instruments. Demand for transport was identified as being particularly challenging.

Diversified fuel sources

Security of supply is of particular concern to the UNECE region. The meeting agreed that it needed to be reinforced by diversifying both geographical and fuel sources, including increasing significantly the share of renewable energy, securing adequate investment in production, transport and distribution infrastructure,

Did you know that ...

The UNECE Website received in 2005 around 6 million visitors, one visitor every 5 seconds. They consulted 20 million pages and downloaded 30 million files. Altogether, it represents 100 million hits.



and deepening political dialogue between producer and consumer countries.

Clean technologies

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) were considered essential to achieving sustainable industrial development. Developed countries need to take the leading role in this, but SCP is of growing interest to developing and transition countries, given the opportunities to develop in ways that make cost effective use of available resources and minimize negative impacts on human health and the environment. The meeting called for programmes that improve access to affordable, clean and efficient technologies, backed by cooperation between countries on regulatory and administrative issues.

Capacity building and education were considered vital in raising consumer awareness, which in turn leads to greater demand for environmental products and services.

SME capacity building

Business is critical for achieving sustainable development. Delegates highlighted the need for further development and promotion of corporate social and environmental responsibility and accountability in support of this role. This

should include capacity building for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Air pollution/atmosphere and climate change...

Both issues are closely linked to energy for sustainable development and also addressed within the framework of specific legal instruments, the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Complementing the discussions under the Conventions, the meeting focused on linkages and synergies between air pollution and climate change.

Integrated approach

Delegates called for urgent action to meet the objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving the global environment, cutting air pollution and enhancing energy security in conjunction with efforts to eradicate poverty. These issues should be addressed in an integrated fashion and taking account of all scales, local, regional and global. Recent studies of linkages between air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions have shown significant savings can be achieved through integrated approaches; these should be developed further, taking special care to explore trade-offs, e.g. the use of wood for fuel increasing particle emissions.

Partnerships...

The Forum agreed that for each of the issues discussed progress can only be achieved through the involvement of all segments of society. Representatives of the private sector, NGOs, international organizations and partnerships all added their perspective to the discussions. A number of voluntary multi-stakeholder partnerships were presented as examples

of good practice.

Responsibility at the global level...

UNECE is a region which contains great disparity. Within it are four of the world's five strongest economies. The meeting therefore not only discussed how to assist less advanced member States, but also addressed the responsibility of Western Europe and North America to continue their support for developing countries in other regions to tackle energy and climate change challenges. Financial and technical support and capacity building were considered essential both within the UNECE region and in developing countries, including through education and the provision of information. The UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development was considered a model for other regions to promote improvements in education in support of sustainable development. ❖

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Off the press ...

Just issued is the Arabic version of the 14th revised edition of the ECOSOC Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. Addressed to governments and international organizations concerned with the regulation of the transport of dangerous goods, they are also available



in English, French, Russian, Spanish and Chinese.

Available from the *UN Publications Sales and Marketing Section, Palais des Nations, Geneva, e-mail unpubli@unog.ch*

New elements added to Population and Housing Censuses

The new census recommendations prepared by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) at a joint UNECE/Eurostat meeting on 12-16 December include new expanded sections on census methodology and technology. The part of the recommendations on census topics was also revised, and new sections were created on international and internal migration, disability and agriculture. The

new recommendations will be revised to reflect the discussion at the meeting, and will be submitted to the Conference of European Statisticians for adoption at the June 2006 plenary session.

The CES census recommendations are used mainly by countries in the UNECE region and other member countries of the CES, and provide guidance and assistance in planning the census. ❖

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Education for sustainable development

At the first meeting of the UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) which took place on 13-14 December 2005, countries reported on their progress in implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD and discussed challenges that lie ahead. The Committee also heard about good practices available in different parts of the region and agreed on some mechanisms to share them to make the implementation of the Strategy as practical and effective as possible.

Innovative project

The Committee adopted a work plan that includes a reporting mechanism. It considered a rather innovative project: a set of indicators to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of ESD. The key finding was that it is important to measure this throughout the whole implementation process, starting from the initial measures on governance up to the visible effects in society. This last issue is, understandably, very hard to identify and measure.

Interactive plenary

The Committee discussed a possible proposal on ESD for the Belgrade

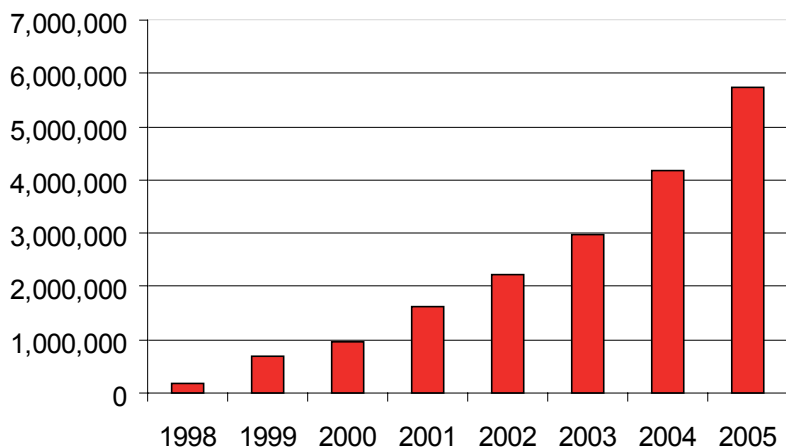


Ministerial "Environment for Europe" Conference to be held in October 2007 – a general plenary session that would address cooperation on ESD between the Environment and Education sectors and regional cooperation for the Strategy's implementation. The session could be combined with a thematic panel discussion followed by interactive debates on ESD's role in solving emerging SD-related problems.

The elected chair of the Committee Mr. Andreas Karamanos, Secretary General of Education (Greece) and the Vice-Chair Ms. Violeta Ivanov, Chief of Environmental Policy and European Integration Division, the Republic of Moldova, met the challenge to lead the process together and give a good start to the implementation of this new cross-sectoral activity. ❖

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